

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled).
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein downloading the selected data sets comprises storing the selected data sets in a buffer of a digital set top box.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, wherein initiation of the first switching event comprises receiving at the digital set top box a signal from a television remote control device to switch channels.
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein downloading the selected data sets comprises storing those of the selected data sets associated with the first information element in a buffer of a digital set top box and storing others of the selected data sets associated with others of the information elements in a memory of the digital set top box, wherein corresponding ones of the others of the selected data sets stored in the memory of the digital set top box replace those of the selected data sets in the buffer of the digital set top box once the first information element is displayed.
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the first information element comprises data associated with the data stream information from the server.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the first information element comprises advertising data selected in accordance with the user profile information.
- 9 - 22. (Cancelled)
23. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

periodically downloading from a server selected data sets according to user profile information, the selected data sets representing information elements for display to a user during switching events;

displaying a first one of the information elements in response to initiation of a first switching event, the first switching event being characterized by unavailability of data stream information from the server; and

discontinuing the display of the first one of the information elements and displaying the data stream information from the server when it becomes available for such display, unless the user has initiated an interactive transaction session with a remote host by selecting an interactive element associated with the first one of the information elements in which case displaying the data stream information from the server is delayed until termination of the interactive transaction session or expiration of a predetermined period of inactivity by the user.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein downloading the selected data sets comprises storing the selected data sets in a digital set top box in which the user profile information is stored.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the user profile information is stored at the server.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the user profile information is stored in a data source accessible by the server.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the data stream information is also stored in the data source.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the remote host comprises an Internet host and the interactive transaction session comprises an electronic shopping transaction.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the user profile information is based on one or more of: the user's television viewing habits, the user's purchasing habits, and the user's use of one or more television services.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the information elements comprise one or more of: advertisement, information regarding the data stream information, information regarding a television program, information regarding a television channel, personal information regarding the user, a segment of the data stream information, or local or regional information.

31. (Currently Amended) A system, comprising:

a server configured to provide a data stream transmission; and

a digital set top box configured to (i) periodically download from the server selected data sets according to user profile information, the selected data sets being included within the data stream and representing information elements for display to a user during switching events; (ii) display a first one of the information elements in response to initiation of a first switching event, the first switching event being characterized by unavailability of data stream information from the server; and (iii) discontinue the display of the first one of the information elements and displaying the data stream information from the server when it becomes available for such display, unless the user has initiated an interactive transaction session with a remote host by selecting an interactive element associated with the first one of the information elements in which case displaying the data stream information from the server is delayed until termination of the interactive transaction session or expiration of a predetermined period of inactivity by the user.

32. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the digital set top box includes both a buffer and a memory and is configured to store those of the selected data sets representing a first one of the information elements in the buffer and others of the selected data sets representing other information elements in the memory.

33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 32, wherein the digital set top box is further configured to replace those of the selected data sets representing the first one of the information elements in the buffer with at least some of the others of the selected data sets representing other information elements in the memory after displaying the first information element.

34. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the digital set top box includes an interface configured to receive signals from a remote control unit, the signal representing initiation of the first switching event, which corresponds to changing channels.

35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the information elements comprise one or more of: advertisement, information regarding the data stream information, information regarding a television program, information regarding a television channel, personal information regarding the user, a segment of the data stream information, or local or regional information.

36. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the digital set top box is further configured to store the user profile information.

37. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, wherein the server is further configured to store the user profile information.

38. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31, further comprising a data store unit accessible by the server and configured to store the user profile information.

39. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 38, wherein the data store unit is further configured to store the data stream information.